

The South India Churchman

The Magazine of the Church of South India

SYNOD NUMBER

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MARCH 1968

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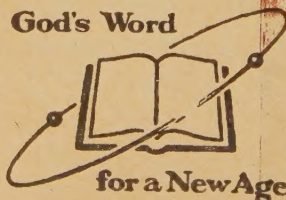
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The Image of the Church of South India

The Commission on literature which met at the Synod in January recommended: 'The image of the C.S.I. is reflected in its official organ. Therefore, in appointing a new Editor one who could project the image should be chosen'. But, in the event, the Executive Committee has appointed an Editor who, apart from his doubtful capacity to project the image of anything at all, is very much at a loss to know what this image is that he has been exhorted to project, and where and how it is to be seen.

A basic question that may be raised in the matter is whether the Church of South India, or any other Church for that matter, should be concerned too much with its own image. For, unlike a nation, a Church does not exist to project an image of itself, but that of its Lord. Jesus himself was not concerned with his own glory or the manifestation of it, but that of the Father, though he himself was such a bright and faithful image of the latter that one who had known him intimately could write: We saw his glory, such glory as befits the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. In so far as the Church has been called to share this responsibility of being an image of the Father with the Christ—to be, in this sense at least, an extension of the Incarnation—it can be a commendably true image or a scandalously false one. Even in the earliest days of Christianity it was realised that, while God could be glorified in one member of the Church, His name might be blasphemed among the gentiles through the life of another.

It would appear, then, to be more profitable to ask what kind of image of its Lord a Church should be projecting than to consider how the image of that Church could be adequately projected by its 'official organ' or in any other manner. Nevertheless, to the extent to which a Church is an institution with a life of its own, it must cause an image—or different images—of itself to be formed in the eyes of the people of the world. It must also create a self-image—what it looks like in its own eyes. Besides, though we have said that the Church should not be pre-occupied with projecting its own image, it is also true that the effectiveness with which it seeks to set forth the image of its Master is enhanced or jeopardised by that which is formed of itself in the minds of both its own members and those outside. Hence the relevance of at least a secondary concern in the Church with the projection of a fair image of itself such as the sub-Committee expects from the Editor of its monthly magazine.

However, while a case can thus be made out for a Church paying attention to its own image, it is by no means easy to say what that image is or where it may be seen so that it can be projected in the proper manner. The recommendation we have quoted at the beginning says that it may be seen in reflection in its 'official organ'. But, actually, it is more imperative than indicative, because it goes on to say, by implication, that whether there is such a reflection at all depends upon the Editor. One may ask in passing whether the editor's slant would be a truer reflection of what the Church really looks like than the reports and other 'copy' from correspondents in the dioceses. That apart, it would perhaps be useful to find out where *else* the image of our Church, the C.S.I., may be seen, or ought to be seen, even much more clearly than in its 'official organ.'

We may, in this Synod Number, ask what kind of image



was discernible, or emerged from, the eleventh session of the Synod. The world, or even the town of Coimbatore, may not have bothered about it at all and the news reporters may not have been falling over each other in trying to capture it for their papers or even to get the hand-outs from the official Reporters. But, if any one from inside or outside had been keen enough about the image, what would he have seen?

The Synod, it may be said, had gathered as a representative body of the C.S.I. not to project an image of itself, but rather to help the individual Churches or congregations learn what kind of image they ought to be presenting of themselves or how they must be mirroring forth 'the triumphs of His grace'. In the process of doing so, however, or perhaps to do so effectively, the Synod had necessarily to form a self-image or be confronted with one. And what was the self-image it succeeded in presenting and how did it come to terms with it? Was it that of 'a people of God' taking itself seriously in its mission as well as in its worship and internal organization? Bishop Gnanadason, who led the Bible Studies* at the Synod, did not seem to think so. Instead, he more than hinted that the C.S.I. was rather like Jonah fleeing to Tarshish when he was commanded to go to Nineveh—receiving an order from the Almighty, but amending it on his own authority and to suit his own idea of what his commission ought to have been. For, the C.S.I., too, had been given a commission of 'neighbourhood ministries', but was pursuing its own plans and purposes, mostly of self-assertion.

Sitting through the 'business' of the Synod and finding it hard to see how it linked up with the Synod theme of *The Church's Ministries in its Neighbourhood*, a few members of the Synod wondered whether an apter image of the C.S.I. would have been a Jonah who did not leave his homeland at all, because he had not heard any call to go anywhere on any kind of mission. It is significant that there is no name for the homeland of Jonah in the Biblical story. There could have been no story about him or any scriptural significance in it till 'the word of the Lord came unto Jonah . . . saying, Arise, go to Nineveh'. All that we are told about him apart from his commission is that he was a Hebrew, a member of a nation that also had no story or significance until to first patriarch also 'the Lord had said . . . Get thee out of thy country'. Even a Jonah who tried to go to Tarshish when he was commanded to go to Nineveh and who, on reaching Nineveh willy-nilly, chose to question the nature of God's mission to the people of that city, finds 'a place in the story' of God's dealings with man, if only as a warning to all who would like to call themselves the people of God. But a Jonah who was so busy arranging his own affairs and planning his own mission that he could not hear the preceptory 'Arise . . . go' might make quite a

* Printed elsewhere in this Number.

success story in the annals of 'secular' history, but not in those of God's servants, the prophets. We believe, however, that Bishop Gnanadason did show the C.S.I. the truer image of itself. And if that is not quite a flattering one, the Church should get busy trying to answer the questions he posed for it to find out how that image could become a more pleasing one.

EDITOR'S NOTE

None of the articles on the Synod in this Number is an official record or report. They are the reports and comments of individual members or findings of Commissions and

Committees on different subjects on which the Synod deliberated. It is hoped that they give readers a fair idea of the matters that engaged the attention of the Synod and the lines along which discussions were carried on. The authors of the articles or excerpts are alone responsible for their comments on the proceedings or particular points of view expressed. The official Proceedings including the Resolutions will be published as a separate volume. Many of the proposals of commissions and committees were remitted to the Executive Committee for further study and that Committee's recommendations about them will be placed before the next Synod.

BIBLE STUDIES

LED BY THE RT. REV. I. R. H. GNANADASON

at the Eleventh Session of the Synod

Church's Ministries in her Neighbourhoods

(Three studies on the Book of Jonah)

General Introduction: The 'miracle of the whale' does not share the theme of the book and we shall leave it out of the present study. However, it is not improbable that Jonah and the whale episode is meant to represent the people of Israel in the Babylonian exile and their deliverance to be a witness unto the nations, Jer. 51:34, 44. Jesus referring to Jonah said that he (Jesus) was to his generation what the prophet was to Nineveh—Lk. 11:29f; Mt. 16:4. (Mt. 12:39 need not be taken up here.)

We read about Jonah, a servant of God and son of a prophet, in 2 Kings 14:25. He seems to have inspired Jeroboam, a king of Israel, to expand his kingdom and restore its borders. He came from Galilee and tourists of our day are shown his home town not far from Nazareth. (Was Jonah then a childhood hero of Jesus?)

Like some other prophets Jonah too was a politician and a nationalist. His nationalism was probably so well known for its narrowness that the author of the book of Jonah chooses him as a character, exposes the kind of nationalism he advocated and brings a new message to God's people.

Jonah's reaction towards the gentile world continues all through the history of the early Church and it persists still. God's mission through the Church is to build a new humanity in Christ, Ephes. 2:11-22.

STUDY I—JONAH 1:1-10

Discovery of one's Neighbourhood

Jonah like Nahum (Nah. 1:1) is disturbed over the happenings (Wickedness, Jon. 1:2) in a foreign Capital and is conscious of God's concern for that city. His belief that the God of Israel rules over all cities goads him to action. He has to go to Nineveh and tell the people there that God does not approve their ways.

But it is hard for him to make up his mind for a journey from a Galilean (Hebrew) village to an Assyrian (heathen) city. He lacks courage and faith. In fact Jonah flees from his own belief, hence, from the presence of God; instead of going eastward overland to Nineveh, he sails westward by sea to Tarshish, v. 3. That is the farthest he can go away from a God who is worshipped primarily on the mountains of Israel. But Isaiah (Isa. 2:16) brings even Tarshish within the sway of the God of Israel. The

Psalms (Ps. 139:7-10) knows nowhere to be away from the presence of God.

Jonah's God still remains on the holy mount of his own country, but hurls from that distance a storm into the sea, v. 4. Mariners lighten the boat (using their practical skill) and also pray (taking a chance), each man to his god. Each man has a god created in an image most suited to him. The captain's request to Jonah also to pray is only to enlist the help of yet another god who might save the situation. Contrast this attitude with Genesis 1:27. It is God who creates man in His own image. All gods created by man must fail and eventually die.

The worship offered by the crew and the co-passengers of Jonah arises out of their uncertainty of the powers of their gods. 'Perhaps,' (v. 6) they say, 'god will give a thought of them that they do not perish'. David once prayed a similar prayer when his son was ill, 2 Sam. 12:22. Prayer to something unknown (Acts 17:22f) is best described as superstition.

On the other hand, Jonah's refusal to worship God arises out of his knowledge of God and His mission. He acknowledges that his is the God of heaven who made the sea as well as the dry land, v. 9. Yet childishly he takes on a sea voyage hoping to flee from Him. He takes shelter in a life of unbelief and rebellion and ceases to pray. His flight from God's presence is total and complete at this stage. He recognises God as creator, but refuses to get involved in His redemptive activity. A life unrelated to one's faith always ends in disaster. A church conscious of its mission (however vague that consciousness may be) but deliberately avoiding it will break down under its own sense of guilt.

Disobedience of God's people brings distress to themselves and the new and selfish neighbourhoods they choose. If the light in you is darkness how great is the darkness, Mt. 6:22f.

Questions for Discussion

1. If the Church of South India were to ask like the lawyer of old (Lk. 10:25-37), 'which is my neighbourhood?' what would be the Lord's answer? Narrate a modern parable.

2. Does urbanisation and industrialisation necessitate the ultimate death of god—a god worshipped with pastoral imageries centering around seed time and harvest? Should

the Christian Church also celebrate with certain reform movements the death of several gods?

3. List some of the reasons why the Church in India is hesitant to enter new situations in a new and meaningful way, e.g., Urban and Industrial society, intellectuals of other faiths, secular world, arts, politics, etc.

4. Compare the life and work in Church-related institutions—schools, colleges, hospitals etc.—with the life and work in local Churches (Congregations) and try to re-discover our neighbourhoods. Why don't we ever say, 'Close down a local congregation' while we sometimes suggest the closure of institutions?

STUDY II—JONAH 3:1-9

A Great Surprise

The inner voice comes to Jonah a second time (v. 1.) with more power and prevails upon him. The prophet's unwillingness to obey God does not change the content of the message. God does not make compromises to suit the whims of the messenger. The message comes from God (v. 2) and the messenger cannot change it. Even Jesus had to accept the cup as given and not change its contents, Mt. 26:39. The early Church refers to the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints, Jude 3, and insists that Jesus Christ, the content of the Christian gospel, is the same for all days, Heb. 13:8.

Nineveh is presented as an overwhelmingly large city measuring more than sixty miles—three days' journey—one way, v. 3. The prophet covers a third of the distance within the city, delivers an incomplete message and is satisfied with his performance. He declares destruction. There is no call to repentance. Even his knowledge of God as gracious and merciful (4:2) fails to influence the nature of his preaching. He seems to be concerned about two things only—to obey the command of God as a bitter duty and to await the death of a people for whom he has no love.

Even so, the response of the people of Nineveh is quick, spectacular and most unexpected. They believe God and mend their ways, v. 5. People are united—from the greatest to the least—in their response to God. The king shares their reaction, legislates on their behalf and completes the fruits of repentance for the whole nation, v. 7. The proclamation of a fast throughout the city is rightly coupled with a call to new ethical living demanding each man to give up his evil ways and violence. What a contrast from the people of Sodom and Gomorrah who were also placed in a similar plight, Gen. 19:4. Has not Nineveh excelled even Capernaum, Mt. 11:23? God makes use of even unwilling workers and blesses their half-hearted work. See Ephes. 3:20.

There was no suggestion of an escape from the wrath of God in Jonah's preaching. However the repentant Community at Nineveh hoped that God may relent after all, v. 9. Their hopeful response must be attributed to the spirit of God confronting them in spite of the negative approach of the preacher. The Spirit of God as a direct agent in 'Evangelism' is a reality.

Escape from impending disaster (Lk. 3:7f) marks only the beginnings of the gospel. Forgiveness and reconciliation (Mk. 11:25) should follow to complete the good news.

Questions for Discussion

1. What are the dangers of professionalised preaching? Suggest changes in (a) theological training (b) the ministry of the laity, that these dangers may be averted.

2. How much of the preaching of the church is coloured by the personal jealousy, resentment, bitterness,

etc. of the preacher concerned? Find sociological and psychological reasons for a poor pastor attacking the rich, older men criticising the young, men of little knowledge condemning members of other faiths and so on, and re-discover Christ as the centre and content of Christian preaching.

3. Keeping historic Christ as constant, evolve a formula for modern evangelism with special reference to (a) Christian worship and (b) Christian witness.

STUDY III—JONAH 3:10, 4:11

New Patterns of Ministry

Repentance brings its reward and the people of Nineveh are spared, 3:10. God's love for the sinner is revealed and there is joy before the angels of God, Lk. 15:10. But Jonah fails to share this joy, 4:1. He is angry because the very thing that he feared right at the beginning of his mission has happened.

Jonah has missed the very purpose of his mission. He makes the destruction of Nineveh a prestige issue and tries to justify the initial abandoning of the mission, v. 2. He knows that God has been merciful with his own nation and remembers how He forgave his forefathers when they worshipped the golden calf in the wilderness and made a new covenant with them, Ex. 34:6. But a similar treatment meted out to the heathens in Nineveh is wholly unreasonable in his eyes.

Instead of making God and His love the centre of his mission, Jonah has put himself at the very centre of things. He would rather die than suffer the humiliation of his words not coming true, v. 4. He refuses to accept that God has forgiven the Ninevites and still hopes that destruction may follow. He gets out of the city, and makes an observation tent and awaits the possible destruction of the city, v. 5.

Jonah is taught a new lesson through an acted parable. The death of a plant and his disturbance over it reveal to him his selfishness and self-pity, v. 9. He also realises the human problem involved, v. 11, the city means people, even innocent children. Sin and judgement are not to be dealt with in an impersonal way. The prophet is helped out of his obsession with his own self and his own people. He is given an opportunity to see the fulness of his mission, to follow all the way the love of God flowing towards peoples of all the world. The mission of the Church is an unlimited concern.

We see a new testament parallel to the Jonah story in the parable of the prodigal son, Lk. 15:11-32. The elder son typifies the Jewish attitude towards the gentiles. He is angry at the prodigal's return, v. 28. He is proud that he never disobeyed the law, v. 29. He is full of self-pity because he was not allowed to make merry with his friends. He is jealous that the return of 'this son of yours' is celebrated, v. 30. The same attitude lingered in the early Church. Do we celebrate the return of the prodigals?

Questions for Discussion

1. What significant changes would you suggest for the Church's ministry in India as we as a nation move towards the ideals of a welfare state—taking welfare state as a new neighbourhood and not as a rival to the Church?

2. To what extent can the Church's ministry help the state in the face of student and labour unrest, pressure-tactics (gheraos) of many kinds and growing secularism?

3. How can one achieve communal integration rather than communal harmony through the life and work of the Church?

4. 'New neighbourhoods and not new frontiers call for the new type of ministry'—discuss.

Eleventh Session of the Synod, 1968

A Report by the Rev. Dr. J. R. Chandran

The Eleventh Session of the C.S.I. Synod was held at the Stanes High School at Coimbatore on January 12th-16th, 1968. The Synod is the highest legislative body of the C.S.I. and consists of all the Bishops and elected representatives of the clergy and laity of each of the Dioceses of the Church. The Synod meets once in two years to review the life and work of the Church and to plan the Church's programme of work for the ensuing period. The eleventh session had 207 voting delegates, 16 accredited visitors, 13 Youth observers and several fraternal delegates and guests from India and abroad.

Fraternal greetings were conveyed to the Synod by the Rev. C. B. Firth representing the Conference of British Missionary Societies, the Rev. John Buteyn of the Reformed Church in America representing the American Mission Board, the Rev. M. A. Z. Rolston representing both the National Christian Council of India and the United Church of Northern India, the Rt. Rev. Ernest John, Bishop of Nandyal representing the Church of India, Pakistan and Ceylon and the Rt. Rev. M. Ambrose, the Vicar-General of Coimbatore representing the Roman Catholic Church. In conveying the greetings of the Roman Catholic Church, Father Ambrose recalled the change that had happened in Inter-Church relations as a result of the Second Vatican Council and expressed the hope that the present movement will lead to a greater manifestation of the Unity of the Church.

The Moderator in his opening address made a brief survey of the present situation in the country and in the Church. He referred to the weakening of the Congress Party's hold in the political life of the nation and the rise of several non-Congress Governments, the political instability in some states, the unrest caused by the economic problems and the rising prices, and the linguistic problem and raised the question whether the Church was fully prepared to make its witness effectively in this context. Speaking of the Church he drew attention to the continuance of casteism and provincialism within the life of the church and called for a fresh renewal and commitment to the Lord of the Church. Surveying the developments in the Church since the last meeting of the Synod, he referred to the consecration of two Assistant Bishops, one in Mysore and another one in Madhya Kerala and the Bishop for South Kerala Diocese, the slow progress made in union negotiations with the Lutherans, the growth in ecumenical relations with the Mar Thoma, the Roman Catholic and the other churches and also the sad division which had occurred in Madhya Kerala. The situation in Madhya Kerala had been accentuated by the help given to the dissident group from abroad and the anti-ecumenical group in America had used the situation to do a great deal of propaganda against the Church Union movement in general and the Church of South India in particular. The Moderator also referred to the restrictions imposed by the Government on the entry and stay of missionaries from overseas and stressed the importance of the Church developing full responsibility for its life and work as rapidly as possible. It is important that more competent man-power for the Church's mission and service is developed. In this connection he made special reference to theological education and ministerial training and called upon the members of the Synod and the dioceses to give full support to the efforts of institutions like the United Theological College in Bangalore which have initiated programmes for more advanced training relevant for the present situation and for reducing financial dependence on Churches overseas.

The programme structure of the Synod at this meeting differed from previous meetings in two ways. Firstly, there were no main theme addresses. Instead, there were three well prepared Bible Studies led by the Rt. Rev. I. R. H. Gnanadasan on the theme, 'The Church's Ministries in its Neighbourhood.' Expounding the Book of Jonah Bishop Gnanadasan brought home to the Synod participants some very challenging insights about the Church's responsibility for the neighbourhood. Secondly, the reports from the standing committees were not presented directly to the plenary session of the Synod as in previous synods. They were first discussed in separate sub-committees which made their recommendations to the Synod for appropriate action. Thus the reports of the standing committees received greater and more careful attention at this Synod than in previous meetings. Both these were very welcome improvements.

Some of the decisions taken by the Synod are worthy of special mention :

(a) The Synod endorsed the Theological Commission's statement on 'Democracy in the life of the Church.' This statement affirms that democracy in the life of the Church should be expressive of the fundamental Christian insights about the *Koinonia* or *fellowship* character of the Church, the responsible participation of every member in the whole life and mission of the congregation and the principle of fulfilling the corporate responsibility through representatives. This will need both a rediscovery of the meaning and practice of the 'Church meeting' for each congregation and the development of a new concept of the Pastorate Committee based on the service motive. The members of the Pastorate Committee will be chosen on the basis of different 'service' activities of the congregation, each member representing a definite service programme of the Church. By endorsing the statement the Synod has asked the bishops to experiment on the new understanding of the congregation and the Pastorate Committee in a few congregations, and then gradually extend the practice to the whole diocese.

(b) Dissatisfaction with the present form of the diaconate in the 'three-fold-ministry' has been engaging the attention of the C.S.I. as well as many other churches for the last two decades. But it has not been possible to come to any solution acceptable to all. The Synod, at this meeting, approved the joint proposal of the Theological Commission and the Ministerial Committee to hold a theological consultation on the theme *The Diaconia of the Church Today*, with a view to clarifying the meaning and image of the Diaconate in the Church's Ministry.

(c) The Synod gave its approval to the study of the place and function of Cathedrals in the life of India today, which has been initiated by the Theological Commission. A survey is being made on what the Cathedrals in the C.S.I. dioceses actually mean for the life of the diocese. The Rev. A. H. Dammers, a former C.M.S. missionary in South India, who has made a study of Cathedrals in Britain has been invited to assist in the study. A Conference on the subject will be held in Madras next March at which all the C.S.I. dioceses will be represented.

(d) The Synod agreed to an amendment in the section of the C.S.I. Constitution on *The Ministry of the Laity*. The purpose of the amendment is to state more clearly and emphatically the responsibility of the laity both in the ordering of the Church's life and in the fulfilment of its mission in the world.

(e) Another action taken by the Synod was to adopt the recommendations of the *Marriage Questions Committee* on the Church's attitude to its members who have contracted marriages with non-Christian partners. The Synod affirmed the Common conviction of the Church that a Christian should marry only a fellow Christian. It also recommended to the bishops that, where the Christian partner in a mixed marriage with a non-Christian gives satisfactory assurance of his or her intentions to fulfil the duties of Church membership and to bring up the children as Christians, and where the non-Christian partner also gives assent to these intentions, the bishop may restore the Christian partner to the full privileges of the Church. It was however significant that the Synod rejected one clause from the Committee's recommendations, namely that 'marriage with a non-Christian is not according to God's will for the Church.' It also does not seem right to take for granted that a person contracting marriage with a non-Christian can be refused communion as part of disciplinary action. The subject needs further study and thought. The C.S.I. would do well to undertake a study of the meaning of Christian marriage. What is distinctive in Christian marriage? Cannot the Church distinguish between those marriages in which both the partners understand the meaning of Christian marriage and want to receive it as a sacrament of Christ's love for his Church and marriages which are not based on this understanding and in which one partner may not even be a Christian? In so far as God blesses all marriages, should not the Church be willing to bless even the second type of marriages some of which may be mixed marriages?

(f) Another resolution of great consequence for the future life and witness of the Church was that Christians should identify with non-Christians in the observance of national and regional festivals and that the Church should not unnecessarily divide the community in the observance of customs.

(g) A number of resolutions passed by the Synod emphasised the Church's service to all men and concern for social justice.

i. The Synod resolved that the Social Questions Committee should have as its primary task the fulfilment of the Church's prophetic role with regard to social and economic justice to the people and that in this task the Committee should seek the cooperation of organisations such as the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society.

ii. The Synod decided to establish a standing committee for *Christian Service in Urban Industrial Society*. In setting forth the reasons for such a standing committee, the sub-committee of the Synod had said, 'We need committed men concerned about industries and industrial society. The message of reconciliation, we believe, involves the promotion of love, justice, freedom, hope, peace and faith. We believe too that commitment to Christ demands a commitment to the world he created, loved, reconciled and to which he will come again.' The suggestions transmitted to the dioceses for involvement in industrial society include pastoral care of people in industrial areas, running conferences for managements and workers in order to help build better industrial relations and efficient productivity, exposing theological students to the world of industry, and challenging commerce and social science students to see their Christian commitment in secular jobs, and the possibility of some of them working in industrial service projects.

iii. The Synod affirmed that education is a ministry of the Church and asked the Dioceses to make a detailed and critical study of the Kothari Education Commission's Report and to implement the Commission's recommendations wherever feasible.

iv. The Synod asked the dioceses to establish rural service centres where people can go and learn better methods of farming, better standards of health and dignity of labour

and also learn to strengthen or develop programmes for the eradication of illiteracy in the villages.

(h) The Synod also took note of the Orissa Freedom of Religion Bill passed by the Orissa State Legislature in December 1967. While sharing the concern of the Orissa Government that conversion from one religion to another by use of force or inducements or by fraudulent means should be prohibited, the Synod stated clearly that the present Bill, if implemented, will lead to serious interference with freedom of religion and freedom of conscience. It declared that the assumption of the Bill that conversion in its very process involves an act of undermining another faith is false and ignores the right of every citizen to freely hold any views and convictions, religious or otherwise. It also pointed out that the ambiguity of meaning associated with 'the threat of divine displeasure' and 'inducements' will provide an occasion for the dominant majority in the state unnecessarily to harass the small minorities and to prevent them from exercising their freedom to propagate their faith and to serve their fellowmen in need.

There were also some questions on which the Synod could not reach any agreement. The Executive Committee of the Synod had proposed certain amendments to the procedure for the election of Bishops. These amendments had been suggested in response to a recommendation from the Synod Theological Commission that the Synod Executive Committee 'consider the advisability of appointing a bishop in advance of the former bishop's retirement, so that the undesirable forms of canvassing which have occurred in some recent episcopal elections could be avoided.' Some members of the Synod thought that the proposed amendments would lead to a diminution of the autonomy of the dioceses and concentration of too much authority in the Synod Executive. Others were not sure whether the amendments would have the desired results. The matter was finally referred back to the Synod Executive for reconsideration.

Another recommendation from the officers of the Synod for the setting up of regional synods also proved to be controversial. There was much heated exchange of views for and against the proposal. Some feared that the regional synods might lead to a linguistic division of the Church and thus promote disunity rather than unity in the country. Others emphasised the need for developing some regional organ for the fulfilment of the Church's mission in relation to regional cultures and economic and social needs peculiar to different regions. The point was also made that for fuller participation of the Church members in the life and mission of the Church the language of the people should be increasingly used for the deliberation at the higher councils of the Church. At the same time the need for periodic meetings of the full synod and even meetings of a national synod was also stressed with a view to promoting the wider unity of the Church in India. Finally the Synod asked the Executive Committee to spell out the implications of the proposal in the light of the synod discussions.

The officers for the next biennial period :

Moderator .. The Most Rev. P. Solomon, Bishop in Dornakal.

Deputy Moderator .. The Rt. Rev. J. E. Lesslie Newbigin, Bishop in Madras.

General Secretary .. Mr. S. Kanakaraj Elias.

Treasurer .. Mr. D. R. Vedamuthu.

For the first time since the inauguration of the CSI the Synod has made the General Secretary's office a full-time salaried position. This was the result of a growing realisation, over the past several years, of the heavy load of work which fell on the General Secretary and of the need for an Executive Officer for the Church.

Musings on the Coimbatore Synod

This is not an official or even an unofficial account of the Synod. Such accounts will be written by others. The official accounts will record the main decisions taken and give news about the elections and other selections; the unofficial ones will express appreciation and kindness behind the arrangements made to put us up, describe the public reception given to us and perhaps say a word about the weather at Coimbatore, how members had brought warm clothing expecting it to be cold and how some of them had to put on fans to go to sleep at nights. I am merely making a few comments on some of the business transacted at Synod and how it was transacted. It may be remembered that soon after the meetings of Synod there was a meeting of Mission Board Secretaries, Bishops and their advisors. My musings will take in that meeting also.

Usually one of the main items of business at Synod was consideration of the reports of the various Standing Committees and their recommendations. These Standing Committees consist of persons carefully chosen on the basis of their qualifications and aptitude for their role. Some Committees would survey their work for the previous biennium and make certain recommendations, others would be content merely to survey their work and stop at it; and the House would know what had been done and what should be done in the future.

This time a new procedure was tried out. The entire membership of the Synod was split *ad hoc* into 14 Commissions and asked to consider and make recommendations on the reports of the Standing Committees. It is no reflexion on many of the estimable gentlemen (and ladies) who were put into these Commissions, without any special qualifications, to serve on them that they must have been greatly intrigued about the sudden responsibility thrust on them. They were given one day to discuss all issues that might rise out of the reports and make their recommendations. Desiring naturally to justify the confidence reposed in them they wanted to bring up a maximum number of recommendations, some as many as 25, or even I think thirty. It is no reflexion, I repeat, on these estimable gentlemen and ladies that their recommendations could not be fruits of deep study and thought, and that these recommendations should often appear half-baked and sometimes bordering on the fantastic.

On the next day without any previous notice as to what these recommendations were going to be, the House was called upon to pronounce on them. Mostly the list of recommendations about to be discussed was put into the hands of members just before the discussion started. The House, it may be said, rose to the occasion. Prof. Slater long ago commented on the South Indian habit of generalising on every subject. The House showed that it could discuss any subject without any study or notice. The recommendations ranged over a vast gambit; but the House was not to be beaten. It must be however said to the credit of members that most of the half-baked and ill-conceived suggestions were soon spotted.

But we would question the soundness of the whole procedure. The pattern followed was that of the World Council of Churches or Lambeth Conference. But there is an important difference in the first place, between their status and that of our Synod and secondly in the way that business was tackled. In regard to status, they are Conferences whose recommendations are not binding; the Synod legislates for its Dioceses. And as for the way in which business was tackled the World Council and Lambeth appoint their Commissions well ahead of time and supply

members with questionnaires and abundant study material; and during the Conference itself many days are spent by each Commission in considering each subject.

How can any assembly, however wise, be expected to make sound decisions in one day on about 250 or so recommendations submitted to it? It might be said that in the old days also all the reports that went before the 14 Commissions would have come before the House; but the House was not asked at a moment's notice to commit itself right and left to so many recommendations. After the discussions had proceeded for some time the Moderator or his Deputy relieved us of great responsibility by informing us that these recommendations were not binding on Dioceses but would be sent up as study materials to appropriate bodies. But we would like to ask whether recommendations conceived in such haste are deserving of careful study.

It was unfortunate that a carefully thought-out proposal of the Executive to meet a problem that may become more pronounced in the future was smothered because it was also routed through one of the *ad hoc* Commissions. Was the Executive so unsure of itself that it should have asked for the endorsement of the proposal from a Commission? It was one thing to route recommendations of Standing Committees through the Commissions; it was another thing altogether to route a recommendation of the Executive itself via an *ad hoc* Commission. The weight it would have commanded as a recommendation of the Executive Committee was lost when it came through the Commission.

There was also another reason why the proposal failed. There is an old proverb which says, 'Give a dog a bad name and hang it.' It was unfortunate that the proposal should have got the name 'Regional Synods'. All that was meant was that, since there were problems peculiar to each language area, there might be consultative bodies for each area to discuss these without troubling the Synod. But the resentment against an *ad hoc* Commission having the temerity to make what members thought was a far reaching proposal about the constitution and structure of the C.S.I. doomed the proposal, before its merits could be examined or even its implications explained.

About the election of Bishops the original suggestion of the Synod Theological Commission was that, as a means of eliminating unseemly electioneering, the idea of electing a new Bishop before the old one vacated his seat might be considered. As to how the adoption of this suggestion could have achieved this, I myself cannot understand. But the suggestion had its teeth taken out at the Executive in October last; and all that was recommended to Synod was that certain preliminary steps about the election might be started before election itself was due. The recommendation, however, was not fully explained; nor was the House willing to listen to any explanation, since it felt suspicious about the overtones of the proposal. There is no doubt that in the original form in which the suggestion was submitted to the Executive Committee it would have been positively dangerous; but it must be admitted that even in the modified form in which the Executive finally wanted it, it would have solved no problem and may on the other hand have created new problems.

The Secretaries of the Mission Boards had a full day meeting with Bishops and their advisors, many useful subjects discussed and decisions arrived at.

One may be allowed to express some surprise at one of the subjects brought up, viz., whether the Boards should not hereafter have their dealings with C.S.I. straight without any truck with the Dioceses. It would certainly make things

a lot easier for Board Secretaries if this were done; it would be easier for Board Secretaries to dispose of a matter with one letter instead of having to write many letters. As far as they were concerned, it was a case of choosing between two formulas; the choice could have been made either way. Though the adoption of one would have made things easier, considerable detachment was possible in the choice. In our case, however, it was a matter of life and death as to which formula was chosen. One is reminded about the lines Leigh Hunt wrote about the office of the Prince Regent of England 150 years ago

Tables strewn with tea and toast
Death warrants and the 'Morning Post'

The argument in support of the idea from this end was that it would promote the unity of the C.S.I. There are many things which can be put forward under the excuse that they would promote unity. One may say that if all the Dioceses were brought together and located in the same place then all internal differences would forthwith disappear. We must not be mesmerised by every proposal that claims to promote unity. There were many general arguments advanced during discussions, mostly against the proposal; but Bishop George Devadoss of Madura killed it by quoting a decision of the last Synod against it.

The idea that there should be Missionaries from here to the West even as there have been Missionaries from there to here was largely sponsored by Bishop Newbigin. The argument he advanced was that a good deal of the West was now non-Christian and he certainly knows a good deal about the matter. The idea is a good one; but I hope when worked it will be worked with care. Even as not everyone is not deserving of being sent abroad for higher studies, not everyone who is studying abroad is capable of being considered a Missionary. Those chosen for higher studies abroad should be persons of high intellectual calibre; and those chosen for service in Western churches should combine with it a certain dedication of spirit.

It is outside the scope of this article to comment on the tolerance and good humour with which the Moderator presided over the meeting of the Synod or on the consistent brilliance of the Deputy Moderator's interventions in debate or on the charm and gracefulness with which the out-going Secretary conducted her business or on the sadness with which we bade farewell to A. Gunamany, who was laying down the office after 14 years of tenure. I trust others will be doing this.

ALPHA

From the Reports of Standing Committees

Theological Commission

(1) The Role of the Theological Commission

The Commission decided to describe its role as three-fold, namely:

- (i) to be an advisory body of the Church on faith and order questions coming up for consideration from time to time.
- (ii) to draw the attention of the Synod to theological issues of importance for the life of the Church as a whole, and
- (iii) to promote theological thinking in the Church.

(2) The Diaconate

The Commission noted that while dissatisfaction with the present form of the diaconate and the desire for a more meaningful and permanent diaconate was expressed in all the reports, it was also evident that until a clearer image of the 'new diaconate' emerged, the dioceses want to maintain the status quo. The Commission agreed that prior to the emergence of a new concept of the diaconate the Church needed a fresh renewal based on a rediscovery of itself as a diaconal or servant community. We cannot conceive the diaconate apart from the diaconal character of the Church.

It was, therefore, decided to support the proposal made by the Synod Ministerial Committee that a Synod consultation be held on the theme: The Diaconia of the Church Today.

(3) Democracy

The Commission noted that even though valuable comments had been received from the regional consultations, the questionnaire prepared by the Commission had not been used by any of the dioceses to provide the necessary information. The Commission received the different reports and had a general discussion on the place of democracy in the life of the Church. There was general agreement on the following points:—

- (i) The present situation demands a systematic exposi-

tion and teaching of a doctrine of Christian participation in politics. Such exposition should also pay special attention to the meaning of elections and right type of canvassing for elections.

(ii) An uncritical identification of democracy found in the secular sphere with the Christian form of society has led to the importation of the secular practices, including wrong forms of canvassing and capturing power, into the life of the Church. This has adversely affected the fellowship of the Church in many places.

(iii) The situation demands a fresh understanding of the nature and mission of the Church. It is not the Church which has to learn the meaning of true community from the world. The Church has, therefore, the responsibility of understanding and interpreting the democratic principle in the light of its calling to be the firstfruit of the new humanity brought about by the work of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The image of the servant community is fundamental.

(iv) Democracy in the life of the Church should be expressive of the fundamental Christian insights about the Church. A democratic constitution of the Church will therefore seek first to express the Fellowship of Koinonia character of the Church. Secondly, it will express the responsible participation of every member for the whole life and mission of the congregation. Thirdly, it expresses the principle of fulfilling the corporate responsibility through representatives. To this end certain persons are chosen to hold positions of responsibility. But such election to offices, while giving positions of influence should be dissociated from the concept of power in a secular fashion. The Government of the Church needs election of people to certain positions, but the key to such election is responsibility to represent and fulfil the diaconia of the Church and never privilege to lord over others. Authority in the Church is authority to serve. Fourthly, election to offices in the Church will also express the Church's discernment of charismatic gifts, namely, special gifts of the Holy Spirit to

individuals for fulfilling certain functions associated with the mission of the Church.

(v) This understanding of the democratic principle in the life of the Church will need both a rediscovery of the meaning and practice of the 'Church meeting' for each congregation so that the responsible participation of every member in the life of the Congregation may be effectively expressed, and the development of a new concept of the Pastorate Committee based on the service motive. The members of the Pastorate Committee will be chosen on the basis of different 'service' activities of the Congregation and every member will have definite assignments of service.

(vi) It was agreed that rather than asking for a general acceptance of these ideas, the first step to be taken is to ask the Bishops to experiment on the new understanding of the Congregation and Pastorate Committee in a few congregations and then gradually extend the practice to the whole diocese. Only after a period of experimentation attempts should be made to revise the diocesan and congregational constitutions to make the congregational Church meeting rather than the Pastorate Committee, the decision making body for local congregations.

(vii) While in the working of the democratic principle the use of the majority vote for decision making is reasonable, maintaining of the fellowship should have special consideration. If it is known in advance that decision on a particular issue by a majority vote would seriously disrupt the fellowship it may be advisable to postpone decision until a more satisfactory agreement is reached. The principle of decision by majority should also be balanced by the principle of responsibility of respecting and safeguarding the interests of minority groups within the corporate body.

(4) The Faith of the Church

The Commission gave some thought to the Statement on the Faith of the Church prepared by the CSI-Lutheran Inter-Church Commission at their Second meeting and revision of it suggested by the Sixth meeting and made some suggestions for submissions to the Inter-Church Commission through the Union Negotiations Committee of the Synod.

(5) Relations with Roman Catholics

(a) The Commission gave some thought to the situation that has arisen as a result of the growth of the ecumenical spirit in the Roman Catholic Church. The Commission welcomes the cordiality of relations which has come about as a result of the Second Vatican Council. It was, however, agreed that in order to avoid misunderstanding between churches as well as unjustified optimism or pessimism among members objective study of the present developments should be encouraged. In this regard the Commission took note of the programmes already developed in many parts of South India for joint study of common theological and social issues. It was decided to encourage the development of informal joint study groups in different places for a systematic study of the decrees of the Second Vatican Council on Revelation, Church, Ecumenism, etc.

(b) The Commission agreed that there was need to explain to the ordinary membership of the Church what exactly has happened in order to remove misunderstandings and false hopes as well as fears. It was decided to ask the Synod Working Committee to produce a statement with this purpose in mind for the approval of the Synod Executive to be published in all the South Indian Languages as well as in English for the benefit of the faithful. Such a statement will give in as lucid language as possible the relevant facts of Roman Catholic ecumenism with necessary comments.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

As we look back we see how the Women's Fellowship has grown from a small humble beginning like the mustard seed—from being a small sewing meeting or a simple devotional meeting to the wider experience of organised conferences, conventions, leadership training, on diocesan and inter-diocesan levels.

We believe that the first Triennial Conference of the Women's Fellowship held in Madras in 1963 was a God-lee event, to manifest to the men and women of the church the reality of the unity of the Church of South India. Not satisfied with the first conference the Women's Fellowship arranged the second triennial conference in 1966. Believing that all things are possible with God the planning committee, with Mr. S. T. Cornelius as Convenor, overcame many difficulties and arranged the Second Triennial Conference in the beautiful campus of the Christian Medical College, Vellore. From the 'togetherness' during the days of the conference there came an out-going through projects; these include help for the C.S.I. Thailand mission support of a student in C.S.V.; provision of the General Secretary's salary in India.

Another new experience is the growing awareness of the Ecumenical movement in the Women's Fellowship work. Several dioceses, and especially the Madras Diocese are taking active interest in arranging conferences, Bible studies, and dialogues with the Roman Catholic, Lutheran and other churches. Wherever possible joint action is taken in social service. More and more we realise how helpless and inadequate we feel when communicating the Christian Gospel to the non-Christian because the Church is divided.

Rapid social change makes Christian encounter with men of other beliefs part of daily life. Many dioceses arrange leadership training for women, when opportunities are given to hear Hindu and Muslim teachers and priests speaking about their beliefs. Meetings are arranged for women to study other religions so that they can hold dialogues with others in a relevant and intelligent way. The Women's Fellowship has made evangelism an important part of the programme and are active in evangelism in many ways.

As Jesus lived as 'A man for others', the Women's Fellowship tries to follow in His footsteps. Members go and visit and work in slums. The Medak Diocese Women's Fellowship raises a considerable amount each year for the support of the widows of clergy in their diocese.

Christian Home programme is an important part of the Women's Fellowship work. The pressing modern problems in connection with Christian marriage, responsible parenthood, family planning, mixed marriages, abortion are recognised and the Women's Fellowship is trying to help members in seeking solutions.

The Central Women's Fellowship Committee met regularly and the members have shown responsible concern and active interest in the policy and planning of the work. For two years the Women's Fellowship had to manage without a General Secretary. We are grateful to the Coimbatore Diocese for releasing Sister Grace Aaron from 1-7-67 for this work. She is appointed for two years in the first instance.

As a follow-up of the Triennial Conference the Central Committee decided that there should be regional Triennial Conferences giving opportunity for more women to come together to hear and think freely in their own language.

We hope that as a result of contacts made through the Asian Church Women's Conference the C.S.I. Women's Fellowship will have ever increasing opportunities of meeting women from other Asian Churches. One of the ways in which this fellowship will be strengthened is by the C.S.I.

[MARCH 1968]

Women's Fellowship becoming members of the 'Least Coin Fellowship'.

Many of the members of the Women's Fellowship are associates of the order who support the sisters through their prayers and gifts. Members of the Women's Fellowship are helped to realise the need for more men for the ministry and women for the Women's Order and full time service in the church. They are requested to pray for this cause and to help one another to offer their sons and daughters for the ministry of the Church.

THE ORDER FOR WOMEN

The Women's order has great cause of thankfulness to God for the way He has guided and blessed its members during the past two years. Particularly we thank Him for awakening us to the need for the Order to advance along the line of a deeper devotion to Our Lord in prayer, by which we shall be enabled to serve the Church better, in the old ways, and perhaps in new ways as He guides us.

In view of this need for development, and in accordance with the resolution of the Synod in January 1966, a consultation with Bishops was held in Madras in September 1966 on the place of the Order for Women in the life and work of the Church, both now and in the future. As a result we were enabled to see more clearly both what the Church wants and expects from an Order of Sisters of the Church, and also what the call to membership of the Order means in the life of a church worker. Sisters are Church Workers under diocesan authority, but as the name Sister implies, they share a common life. It was therefore thought desirable that, where possible, Sisters should live together, and that there should be at least one community house of the Order in each language area, to be a centre for the corporate life and worship of the Sisters, and also to be a place of vernacular training for Church Workers.

At the Biennial Retreat and Conference of the Order, held in Bangalore from 29th December 1966 to 3rd January 1967, much time was given to considering the purpose and aims of the Order, and how God is calling us to advance. During 1966 the Elder Sisters and one or two other Senior Sisters had the opportunity to visit and have fellowship with other Lay Orders for Women in Europe and in East Asia, and their experiences, shared with the Sisters in the General Conference, brought to us all a wider vision of the vocation of women in the Church. Many Sisters testified to the upholding power they had experienced in the fellowship of the Order, and all were challenged to be more faithful in their observance of the common rule of life and to respond to the call to deepen our life of prayer and fellowship and obedience to God. For the present no drastic change was thought necessary in the constitution of the Order but some possibilities of change are being kept in mind with prayer for God's guidance, e.g. to provide for some Sisters who might be called by God to a life of prayer and intercession as their main work for the Church, to provide for women in secular jobs, who, regarding their work as a vocation to serve God on the 'frontier' might express a desire to become Sisters.

Throughout the conference we were much helped by Bishop Sumitra's Bible studies on 'The kingdom is come,' and during the last three days of silent retreat by Bishop Newbigin's meditations on St. John, chapters 13 to 16, leading up to the great prayer of ch. 17. During the last session of the retreat the election of officers and the rededication of all Sisters took place.

The Elder Sisters, Beatrice Daniel and Grace Aaron, were re-elected for a further period of two years, and so also were the treasurer, Sister Nesamoni Vedakan, and the secretary, Sister Kathleen Higgins.

Some retired Sisters in India and in England are doing part-time work.

Since the last Synod meeting Sister Hilda Samuel, one of the founder members of the Order, has died.

Two new Sisters have been commissioned. Sister Elizabeth Paul of Madras Diocese in November, 1966, and Sister Daisy Manickam of Madurai Ramnad-Diocese in January, 1967.

The Chairman: We are grateful to God for the continued help and wise leadership of our Chairman, the Moderator.

The Warden: During 1966 the Rev. V. T. Kurian was our Warden and we are very grateful to him for his thought-provoking letters each month. From June 1967 we welcome the Rev. W. B. Harris who also becomes our Warden for a second time.

From June 1967 Sister Sara Thomas of Madhya Kerala Diocese has been released from her own diocese to become Warden of Vishranthi Nilayam, on the retirement of Sister Beatrice Daniel from the position.

From July 1967 Sister Grace Aaron has been released by the Coimbatore Diocese to become the Women's Fellowship General Secretary.

A Community House for Andhra: The order as a whole and the Andhra Sisters in particular welcomed the suggestion that Sevananda Centre in Rayalaseema Diocese might become a community house of the Order for Andhra, and a centre of vernacular training for Church work. We pray that this may prove to be practicable.

Regional Retreats: It is hoped to hold the Andhra Sisters' Regional Retreat in Sevananda Centre in November. Other Area Retreats are also being arranged for the latter part of 1967.

Associates: We appreciate the help given by the Associates to the order. We hope that the link between them and the Order may be reviewed and strengthened to make associate membership more meaningful.

Finally, we especially ask for the prayers of the whole Church as we seek to follow God's leading as to the way the Order should develop, and as to possible new ways of serving the Church. We assure the Synod of our renewed commitment to pray for, and to serve the Church.

YOUTH WORK

Youth work is an integral part of the life and work of the Church and as such it deserves our serious attention and urgent action. From the reports received, it is not an exaggeration to say that the Dioceses are giving more importance to youth work. This is seen from the willingness to allot more funds towards youth work and from the steps taken to appoint full-time youth workers.

Organisation: All the Dioceses have a Youth Work Committee or Board which is responsible for planning and supervising the Youth Work. This committee through its secretary or Convener and the Youth Worker or Youth Workers carries out most of the programmes planned by it. In many Dioceses the Central Committee is assisted by area committees on Local Council, District or pastoral level.

Youth Leadership Training: This is one of the items of Youth work given top priority by many Dioceses. In all the Dioceses training institutes are conducted for the benefit of Youth Fellowship Leaders and Sunday School teachers. In some Dioceses V.B.S. directors are given special training. There are a few Dioceses which send one or two of their young people every year to the Summer School conducted by the India Sunday School Union to be trained as Sunday School leaders. They in turn help the Diocesan Youth Work Board in training local Sunday School teachers. Some of these training courses are conducted on diocesan level while others are conducted on district or pastoral level. During the period under report the Rayalaseema Diocese alone has conducted 16 such training courses attended by 640 young people in all.

Youth Conferences, retreats and conventions : Annual Youth Conferences, retreats and conventions are held in most of the Dioceses. The number of young people participating in these Conferences is not encouraging in some Dioceses. However, on the whole, these conferences and conventions have helped many young people to come nearer to their Lord and to one another. A sense of belonging has been created by these activities. The duration of these conferences varies from one to three days.

Conferences on Pastorate level are also conducted in some Dioceses.

Youth Sunday : Most of the Dioceses observe one Sunday in the year as Youth Sunday. The date varies from Diocese to Diocese. On these days young people are given opportunity to actively participate in special worship programmes. Dioceses like Madhya Kerala, South Kerala and Kanayakumari have to a great extent succeeded in raising a part of their Youth Work budget through collections received on this day. If all the Churches in each Diocese make a special effort to observe this day sincerely, a considerable part of the Youth Work budget can be easily raised from the churches.

In addition, a few dioceses observe another Sunday as Children's Sunday. World Sunday School Day is celebrated on the first Sunday in November in many dioceses marked by rallies, processions and competitions.

Youth Worker : More Dioceses have begun to appoint full-time Youth Workers. Some Dioceses have more than one full-time worker. It must be emphasised here that it is imperative that all Dioceses in the C.S.I. must have full-time Youth Workers. There are a few Dioceses where honorary Youth Workers with limited jurisdiction are rendering faithful service. It is worthwhile to make use of the services of honorary youth workers on District or area levels, but the practice of having one honorary Youth Worker for a whole Diocese will not help very much in promoting Youth Work.

Youth Work Budget : Each Diocese has a budget to finance the various projects. In many Dioceses for programme such as conferences, training institutes, camps, etc., expenses are shared by the Central Youth Work budget as well as by local co-operation of Churches, Youth Fellowships and individual Christians. As has already been pointed out, in some Dioceses part of the Youth Work budget is met by the Collections on Youth Sunday.

Sunday Schools : In Dioceses like Madhya Kerala,

South Kerala, Kanyakumari, Rayalaseema, Krishna-Godavary, almost all the Churches have organised Sunday Schools. Most of them make use of the curriculum published by the India Sunday School Union. Periodical Conferences of Sunday School teachers are held, helping them to realise the immense importance of Sunday School work in the total life and work of the Church. It is imperative that Youth Work Boards of all Dioceses must endeavour to see that every congregation has a well-organised and graded Sunday School.

Youth Magazine : It is understood that the Diocese of Madhya Kerala has a youth magazine of its own. Most Dioceses have Youth columns in the Diocesan magazines. Even though it is extremely difficult to run self-supporting Youth magazines, Youth Work Committees are urged to devise ways and means of introducing good Christian literature to our young people. This could be achieved by organising sale of Christian literature by special arrangement with the Diocesan Book-Depots or the C.L.S., Madras.

Vacation Bible School : It is gratifying to note that several Dioceses are showing keen interest in conducting V.B.S. especially during the Summer Vacation. This is a very useful piece of work. In many places vacation Bible Schools have helped Churches in strengthening Sunday School work and in finding dedicated teachers for Sunday Schools. Many Youth leaders began their career in the Church as V.B.S. teachers. The Southern Asia Bible Institute, Bangalore, renders immense help in providing teaching aids and personnel for this work. It is time that all dioceses give serious attention to this aspect of our work among children.

In General : In some Dioceses Christian Endeavour is the pattern of Youth Work. In certain Dioceses, Schools and boarding homes have very lively Christian Endeavour groups.

Reports reveal that in many places young people are active in helping Pastors in conducting worship services, Bible classes, revival meetings and evangelistic campaigns. Some of our young people are keen evangelists too.

However, one has to note that a big majority of our Young People above the age of adolescence are not touched by our Youth programmes. A well-planned Youth programme which aims at reaching our educated Young people is a vital necessity. It is our firm hope that in years to come Youth work will receive a new impetus in consonance with the on-going task of the Church of South India in the world.

Excerpts from the Reports of Commissions

The Commission on Liturgy:

1. There should be placed on record the Synod's appreciation of the services of Dr. J. R. Macphail as Convener of the Liturgy Committee for many years.

2. The Supplement to the Book of Common Worship should be published for use in the dioceses, congregations and families of the CSI.

3. Inasmuch as the Eucharist is historically the normal Sunday worship of the CSI, weekly celebration is to be strongly encouraged, wherever possible.

4. Expression should be given to the active participation of the laity in worship, e.g.

in the reading of the lessons ;

in leading the intercessions ;

in bringing up the elements ; and

in distributing the consecrated elements in large congregations.

5. Whenever the Eucharist is celebrated, the whole

assembled congregation should receive communion, and remain until the end of the service.

6. That the significance of Sunday and of the great Christian festivals should be taught and emphasized.

7. That different methods of administering Communion should be practised, especially where the present method is too lengthy.

Suggestions include:

The presbyter (and his assistants) moving among the communicants and all partaking together ;

The communicants filing past the minister(s) in continuous line and receiving the elements standing.

8. That musical settings of the CSI Liturgy should be made more widely known, both those in English and those in regional languages. Special attention is drawn to the L.P. record of the Liturgy made for sale by St. Mark's

Cathedral, Bangalore, and to tape-recordings of Tamil settings made in Tirumaraiyur, Pasumalai and Jaffna.

That similar attempts be made to record choral settings in Kannada, Telugu and Malayalam.

That at the next session of Synod there should be choral Eucharists in English and in the language of the area in which we meet.

9. That the sermon at the *Eucharist* should normally be short, and based upon the theme and/or Bible passages for the day.

10. That a dialogue sermon (i.e. with more than one person taking part) should be demonstrated at the next session of Synod.

11. That preachers, having modern needs in mind, should seek ways of discussing the subject matter of their sermons with their congregations before or after delivery.

12. That different methods of intercessory prayer should be practised :

- e.g. extempore prayer ;
- the adding of suitable clauses to the litanies of intercession ;
- turning current world problems into topics for intercession.

13. That intercessory prayer may be offered from the midst of the congregation by presbyter, deacon or layman, with due preparation.

14. That attention be given to ways and means of improving the quality of the singing in our churches.

That musically gifted people be given special training in indigenous music, and schools of music be held under diocesan auspices.

15. That more attention be given in our Theological Colleges to practical teachings in the structure and conduct of worship according to CSI forms.

That training in the use of *both* extempore prayer and set forms be given to those who conduct worship in our churches.

16. That Schools of worship for lay people, and clergy Conferences be held at diocesan and local level, with definite programmes of teaching on the meaning and structure of worship, and with demonstrations.

17. That qualified persons be set apart to give teaching in each of the regional languages and in English. The Liturgy Committee might be asked for assistance in this teaching programme.

Laity Work

A change in phraseology from 'Laity Work' to 'Apostolate of the Laity' was preferred by the Committee. As this is the work of the whole church a special committee on the Apostolate of the Laity is necessary at present only to draw the attention of the church to the style of Christian living appropriate to the new neighbourhoods of today, to help the laity to realise their responsibility as Christians in secular occupations and to help them to discharge that responsibility.

For this the leadership in the Church, both clerical and

lay, should be convinced of the need to make people conscious of their responsibility in society and the professions. To this end it is resolved to recommend (i) that Regional conferences for leaders of Dioceses, both clerical and lay, be organised to bring home to them both the urgency and the implications of the apostolate of the laity, (ii) that the apostolate of the laity be emphasised in the training given in Theological colleges, (iii) that week-end conferences for lay representatives from parishes in an area or a Diocese be arranged to help them gain awareness of the mission of both congregations and their individual members, (iv) that study groups, congregational meetings, 'Cottage Prayer meetings' and Youth groups in each pastorate be used for systematic teaching on Christian participation in the life and affairs of the world, (v) that training conferences be held in each diocese for lay workers and those in charge of Youth Work, Women's Fellowships, Sunday Schools and similar groups, to instruct them in the importance of the apostolate of the laity so that they will give adequate place to it in their respective programmes of work, (vi) that professional and inter-professional fellowship groups including agrarian fellowships in rural areas be organised at convenient levels to formulate the issues of Christian responsibility in each profession and discuss them.

Voluntary Church Workers

The total ministry of the Church—pastoral care, preaching, worship and teaching ought to be made available to congregations in the CSI and to this end it is necessary to train and use voluntary lay personnel as well as ordained ministers. Voluntary work must be the exercise of the stewardship of time, talents and power, suited to the needs of congregations. The church should therefore make full utilisation of the gifts of those who become involved in the ministry within the Church for the fulfilment of the total ministry of the Church. We recommend the following resolutions :

1. The methods of training lay voluntary workers—rural and urban—should be properly planned by all dioceses making use of the experiences gained so far.

2. The idea of the 'team-ministry' may be developed as the future pattern, the team consisting of lay voluntary workers and Honorary Presbyters with a full-time Presbyter in charge in towns having more than one congregation as well as in rural pastorates comprising many villages.

3. Systematic training be given to voluntary personnel not only for conducting services but also for teaching the faith and for exercising pastoral care.

4. Serving on committees of the Church should also be regarded as a form of voluntary work and the practice of stewardship. However in order to safeguard against abuse of privileges it is recommended that :

(a) a healthy convention be established of limiting a single individual to membership of not more than a certain number of Diocesan or Synod Committees (except in the case of ex-officio members),

(b) Fixing the maximum number of terms for which a person (who is not ex-officio) can serve on any particular committees,

(c) that committees of churches consist mainly of persons actually working in the respective fields for which the committees are responsible.

Mr. Treasurer Bows Out

(Contributed)

There were Treasurers of Synod earlier, and there will be Treasurers hereafter; but many will find it difficult to separate Mr. Gunamony from the Treasurership of Synod. The Church of South India has existed now for 20 years; and during fourteen of them Mr. Gunamony was Treasurer; so he is the only Treasurer that many know; and, therefore, they may have come to think that no one else is capable of being Treasurer. Once or twice during the fourteen years he was contested; but the contest was not serious. Once when Mr. Rajaiah D. Paul retired as Secretary, as a gesture, he also threatened to resign but was easily persuaded to withdraw the threat. No other person in Synod has held office for such a length of time. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that a certain amount of inevitability was read into his association with Treasurership and it came to be looked upon in the light of a natural phenomenon.

When the C.S.I. came into being, one used to wonder how the Synod could function as an effective Central Body without any assured financial resources. The Dioceses had such resources; so had local churches. These bodies have a certain definiteness; they have 'a local habitation' and could command the local loyalties. Even though the Dioceses, as such, came into existence only 20 years ago, they are reassortments of older bodies with longstanding sources of income. The resources of local churches may not be as much as Ministers would desire, but they are pretty sure resources. But the central machinery was new in every respect and could not count on anything.

It was in such circumstances that the first Treasurer took up his work. It is no reflexion on Mr. Gunamony's predecessors to say that the present solvency, if not financial strength, of the C.S.I. is largely due to his handling of our resources. Anybody who has had charge of the finances of religious bodies will know how many are the persons who want to draw out moneys and how few are those who want to pay in moneys; and these bodies are expected never to falter or fall in their payments. And the payments must be made not merely promptly and honourably but even with zest, (since scripture says it is more blessed to give than to receive). That Synod has been able to carry out its commitments easily and without the possibility of reproach was largely due to Mr. Gunamony.

The Synod Treasurer is not merely concerned with financial matters. He is an office-bearer of Synod and is, therefore, concerned with its general well-being. He sits on the platform while debates go on in meetings of Synod or its Executive; but he is not as involved in them as the others sitting by his side, who at any time may be called upon to give an explanation or a ruling. Because of his comparative detachment, he can see the issues a little more definitely. Therefore, in exercising his responsibility as an office-bearer he has an advantage over his colleagues.

For the task he was called upon to play in debates Mr. Gunamony was well qualified, not merely perhaps because of his intrinsic qualities but also because of his training; for he not merely had a Master of Law degree, not merely had been a practising lawyer but had been a teacher of Law for some years. This gave him a clarity both of grasp and of expression. One need not have always agreed with him to have admired this quality which he always brought to bear in discussions.

Naturally as Treasurer he spoke most authoritatively on matters which touched on money; and it is surprising how many subjects somehow touched on money. But there was hardly any subject in which he was not at home. During the fourteen years it could be said that it was chiefly when Bishop Sumitra was Moderator that he was at his best. Bishop Sumitra would sit back, with a wise-crack always simmering in his mind, patiently and tolerantly allowing all sides of a question to be opened up and faced before he himself gave his opinion or asked for a vote. In those days both Mr. Rajaiah D. Paul and Mr. Gunamony had a major role to play, and were a pleasure to watch. In fact their combination will remain a historic one.

During the years of the negotiations that culminated in the inauguration of the C.S.I. Mr. Gunamony had been a strong opponent of Union. The Travancore Council of the S.I.U.C. to which he belonged was against Union for a long time and came in only at the last moment. Possibly Mr. Gunamony had come round before his Council itself finally voted for Union; but he was associated with the anti-unionists for a long time. It was, therefore, heart-warming to see this determined opponent of the C.S.I. before it came into being proving to be such a bulwark of the C.S.I. after it had come into being. And it is certainly a tribute to the nature of the Church of South India that it could come to command such unquestioning and dedicated service from an erstwhile opponent.

Now Mr. Gunamony has decided that the time has come for him to lay down the reins of office. A. G. Gardiner, the famous writer of 50 or 60 years ago, commenting on Prince Ranjit Singh's retirement from cricket, said, 'Alas the Prince is forty and alas the Jam Sahib is fat.' Forty was supposed to be an appropriate age for retirement in cricket. Nobody has prescribed an age of retirement for Treasurers; but Mr. Gunamony has decided that at 69 he is too old for the Treasurership. He was largely led to this decision because of the arthritis which has lately begun to trouble him; but Archbishop Wm. Temple grew up and coexisted for years with gout, a similar disease, and was none the worse for it.

Since Mr. Gunamony has now retired, all that we can say is we shall miss him a good deal; and the C.S.I. certainly owes him much. We wish him well.

THE DIOCESES



MADURAI-RAMNAD DIOCESE

Pastors' Conference on Voluntary Workers

Thirty-five pastors attended a conference on Voluntary Church Workers on Monday and Tuesday, November 20th and 21st, organized by the staff of the John J. Banninga Memorial Retreat and Training Centre, in Pasumalai.

The Rev. C. J. Daniel of Charapuram, Director of Volunteer Training in the Trichy-Tanjore Diocese, kindly conducted the opening and closing devotions and delivered a key address during the course of the conference.

A panel composed of two presbyters and two laymen—Rev. L. V. James, Rev. J. Thangiah, Mr. Packianathan of Tirumangalam and Mr. Arumanayagam of Pasumalai, set the tone of the conference at the outset by presenting a variety of opinions about 'What a Volunteer Can Do.' Subsequent discussion, prompted in part by the talks of Rev. C. J. Daniel, tended to sharpen but not separate two different emphases: evangelism on one hand and nurture on the other. Rev. J. Paranjothi, considering 'What the Pastor can do,' mentioned among other things the need for a pastor to maintain an effective friendly contact with his workers. More than that, it should be an instructive or edifying relationship, for which conscientious scheduling of regular study sessions would be helpful.

The staff of the Banninga Centre stressed the importance of maintaining 'live records' of the volunteers, if for no other reason than to facilitate the easy introduction of a new pastor to old volunteers at the time of a transfer of presbyters!

Also emphasized by the staff members, (revealing their bias, no doubt!) was the importance of the teaching ministry of both presbyter and volunteer. That the sacraments could become mere rituals without an adequate exposition of the Word of God is a constant possibility, and evangelistic preaching alone may not be enough to counter the danger. Such preaching and the sacraments must be accompanied by constant nurture and instruction. To that end, in telling 'What the Banninga Memorial Centre Can Do,' it was noted that there is now a de-emphasis of training barely literate volunteers and more concentration upon better qualified men who can be truly leaders and teachers. The Centre would be giving leadership training rather than basic religious education. At the same time, the Centre would help pastors with syllabi

and other teaching aids to help them pursue a programme of the instruction in their pastorates.

The conference at its last session with the Bishop formulated the following suggestions as to 'How the presbyters may help the Scheme of Voluntary workers in the service of the Church in the villages!':—

1. Careful selection of regular, willing, devoted and dedicated church-members who would respect the pastor and work under his direction.
2. Seeking also such men retired from Government or other services for the work.
3. Meeting once a month and teaching the voluntary workers according to a set syllabus giving them basic religious education. Holding tests and examinations.
4. Helping to organise and arrange the work of volunteers.
5. Sending them periodically circular letters, giving instruction, encouragement and edification.
6. Supplying them with adequate literature.
7. Visiting the voluntary workers in their residence and villages of work and training them in the conduct of Divine Service and other aspects of pastoral duties.
8. Helping the Banninga Centre in its programme of the training of voluntary workers.
9. Maintaining proper and up-to-date records in the pastorate about the voluntary workers.
10. Obtaining Bishop's licences for them and renewing them before the 1st of January every year.
11. Arranging for retreats, conferences or Seminars on Pastorate or Local Council level.
12. Making provision in the annual budget for the expenses in connection with the training and work of Voluntary workers.

The conference was appreciated for its practical nature, its concern with a vital problem in the ministry of the Church in South India, and also for the opportunity it afforded the pastors to meet in pleasant fellowship.

D. C. GALLUP,
*Director,
Training of Voluntary Workers.*

DORNAKAL

Opening of St. Paul's Parish Hall, Palvancha

The establishment of the Thermal Electric Project in the old forest area of Palvancha has attracted many Christians to the area and on January 21st St. Paul's Parish Hall was opened as the first stage of an ambitious plan of Church development. For some time the young congregation of Christian engineers and workers had been meeting in private houses, but last October they were successful in securing a fine plot of land in a central situation. Without delay work was started on the Parish Hall under the energetic leadership of Mr. A. Rajarathnam, Superintending Engineer and Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council. The members of the congregation threw themselves wholeheartedly into the work, the women raising large donations, and the young men rendering voluntary service on the building in day and night shifts. Friendly contractors assisted by donations of money and materials, and within a period of three months Rs. 20,000 was collected and a large hall completed without outside help. It is probably one of the finest examples of voluntary lay initiative and service in the history of the CSI in Andhra Pradesh and a challenge to the whole Church. The new hall, the largest place of worship in the Diocese apart from the Cathedral, was insufficient to hold the congregation which assembled from the Thermal Station, Kothagudem and surrounding areas, and a large pandal had to be erected outside, where the opening meeting took place, conducted by the Rev. K. Swamidass, Pastorate Chairman, who gave a short history of the work. Bishop Ananda Rao Samuel of Krishna-Godavary gave an inspiring address and after a procession round the Hall, led by the bishops and about twenty clergy, Bishop Priestley unveiled a Commemoration Stone and the Moderator dedicated and opened the building. The dedication service followed the order in the *Supplement*, the

congregation joining heartily in the responses. Various ministers assisted in the dedication of the Table, Reading Desk, Communion Rail and other gifts, and the Sermon was preached by Bishop Priestley, after which the Moderator celebrated the CSI Eucharist. A very large number of communicants took part. In the evening there was a public meeting in English, the Moderator presiding, supported by the other bishops and Mr. T. J. Rathnam, Secretary of the Andhra Christian Council. Mr. A. Rajarathnam gave a financial report and read a letter of greetings from the Chairman of the Electricity Board. The Rev. A. B. Masilamani, of the Bible Society, gave a stimulating address. Copies of the Bible in Telugu were presented to the overseers who had supervised the building. The celebrations closed with a showing of the film, 'King of Kings' and the congregation is now making plans for the erection of the Church itself. Industries of various kinds are being attracted to the area and a large industrial complex is likely to take shape shortly. It is good to know that so enthusiastic a Christian Church is already established. The Parish Committee members have all given themselves whole-heartedly to the work, and well deserve the many congratulations they received.

E.P.

MADHYA KERALA DIOCESE

Centenary Celebration of a Parish

St. Stephen's C.S.I Church of Mundappally in Thiruvalla District of Madhya Kerala Diocese was celebrating its Centenary in the last week of December 1967. This is a comparatively small Parish which came into existence on account of the work of some leading Missionaries like Archdeacon Kaily. Some four families came out of the old Syrian Church at the time of the Great Revival in Central Kerala after the period of the helping Mission of the C.M.S. in the Syrian Church. The church now comprises 125 families. It has got an Upper Primary School and 2 Lower Primary Schools and 4 Outstation Churches. Recently a well-equipped Hospital has been put up by the sole endeavour of the local people.

An exemplary thing rendered by the people is that some years ago they deputed 2 Lady Missionaries to the Rayalaseema Diocese on a voluntary basis. The church is a small but beautiful one. The Parish people are very ardent with missionary enthusiasm. Some of the young men like Mr. Ninan Koshy, M.A., have taken very active share in the affairs of the church as well as other Christian enterprises around.

The Souvenir prepared by the Committee was released on 26-12-1967.

A thanksgiving service, confirmation service, and a great public meeting in which the Metropolitan of the Marthoma Church, both Bishops of the Diocese and a Metropolitan of the Jacobite Church participated, were conducted at the time. The local people have raised a beautiful hall in the name of the late Rev. M. V. Pothan who was the Vicar of this church for a long period and who had earned great reputation in the service of the Diocese. This hall was dedicated and the Centenary meeting was conducted in it. The annual convention was also conducted during the period. This Jubilee was a time of great rejoicing and an occasion for a rededication of the people. The Rev. P. D. John, B.A., B.D., the former Vicar and Rev. M. K. George, M.A., B.D., STM., the present Vicar have taken great interest in these affairs.

P. J. MATHAI,
Church Warden.

MYSORE DIOCESE

Shimoga Area Training Camp

The training camp held at Shimoga from 8-12-67 to 10-12-67 was meant to educate the laity, local preachers and the bible women. This was the first of its kind to be held in the area which is a developing area with eight Pastorate and two Advisory Committees. To finance the project, a provisional chart was drawn up to pool funds to realise a sum of Rs. 1,000. The Diocese was kind enough to sanction a cash grant of Rs. 250. The balance was met out of contributions received from the several Pastorates of the area and from donations from individuals.

On the appointed day ninety-two delegates including clergy, biblewomen and laity, both men and women, from different places and language groups assembled. For Rt. Rev. H. D. L. Abraham, Asst. Bishop, this was his first official visit to the area. He spoke on Worship and Witness; the Introduction of C.S.I. New Liturgy; Popularising the C.S.I. Constitution and the Duties and Responsibilities of the Church member of the present day. Rev. A. M. Bhaskara, Principal of the U.K.S., Tumkur, spoke on Stewardship and Christian giving.

The lectures given in Kannada were impressive, educative and thought-provoking and their message was impressed on the hearts and minds of the listeners. After each lecture, there were opportunities to put questions to the speaker. Intelligent questions were put and convincing replies were obtained. Besides this, discussion groups were arranged at the close of each lecture and the reports heard.

The Asst. Bishop in his lectures impressed the audience both with his simplicity and with examples from his

personal experience. He never failed in his attempt to make the audience understand the subject. He gave special emphasis to the Indianization of customs and habits and the promotion of the Indian culture, tradition and style. He further advised us to discard Western habits as far as possible. He introduced the new C.S.I. Liturgy to the Churches here. He also explained its meaning and its special features.

Rev. A. M. Bhaskara had his own style of wit and humour which was thought-provoking. He attacked violently the present-day narrow mindedness of Christian thought about Giving and Stewardship. He appealed to all to cultivate the habit of reading biblical books and the Bible in particular. He threw out a challenge to the audience to consider how many times they have read the Bible in full.

At a closing meeting the thanks of the members were offered to the Asst. Bishop, Rev. A. M. Bhaskara and to all concerned with making the arrangements for the meeting.

SWAMIDAS AARON.

Nagari Retreat

November 1st and 2nd, 1967

More than thirty members of Bellary churches gathered at Nagari for a two-day retreat arranged by the Bellary Area Council of Churches. The theme of the retreat was 'A New Creature in Christ', and the leader, Rev. Sunder Clarke, Presbyter-in-charge at the Cathedral, Madras, gave four talks on this.

Rev. A. Chidanda led the opening devotions. Later the speaker and delegates were welcomed by the Area Chairman, Mr. P. L. Samuel.

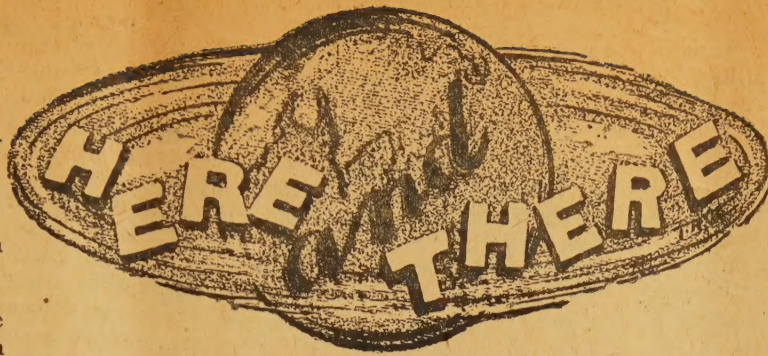
The opening address was on 'The old Creature'—What is man in the Bible? (a) The Establishment—Man was in a privileged position, being made in the image of God for fellowship with God. He is the object of God's choice and love. (b) The Disestablishment of man. Sin is disobedience to God. Its effect is to break the relationship with God and then block love. (c) The Re-establishment of man—Man tried to find remedies for sin by his or others' efforts. God sent His son and the sons of men become the sons of God.

After discussion groups had met and reported, midday intercessions were led by Rev. B. V. Thimappa.

The second address was on 'The New Creature'. Becoming a Christian involves putting on a new life. This experience may be sudden or gradual. It happens by a conviction of sin, confession and cleansing and results in inward joy and peace. But there must be

(continued on cover p. 3)

[MARCH 1968]



Increased Religious Activity Noted By Czech Communists

(London)—During the past year there has been in Czechoslovakia an increase in the number of church baptisms, marriages, funerals, and children taking religious instruction. The number of people participating in religious ceremonies has also increased.

'It is therefore vitally necessary to intensify the ideological campaign to overcome this negative tendency, particularly among the young', says a document dated August 7, 1967 and circulated by the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Czechoslovakia to all party organs.

Reviewing recent unsuccessful negotiations between the Czechoslovakia Government and the Vatican, the document notes partly successful efforts by priests and laymen to enlist the support of intellectuals, professional men and even Communist Party functionaries.

Finally, it invites local party leaders to take appropriate pedagogical and politico-religious measures to increase the instructional efficacy in the fight against the influence of religious ideology'.

They must be vigilant, the Central Committee says, to ensure absolute observance of the law regulating church-state relations. Citizens are warned to refuse to admit any new forms of religious life'.

EPS, Geneva.

Replacement of Experienced Chinese Leaders 'Perturbs' British Visitor

(Geneva)—'Vast numbers of leaders and experienced persons in every walk of life in China have been summarily removed, without right of appeal or redress. And in many cases young persons with relatively little experience have assumed positions of great responsibility for which they have not been trained.'

This 'ruthless replacement of experience' was 'one of the most perturbing impressions' gained by the Rev. Ian Thomson on a recent three-week visit to the People's Republic. Mr. Thomson is doing research on laymen abroad in Christian mission for the Conference of Missionary Societies in Great Britain and Ireland.

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Reporting his impressions to leaders of international organisations here, Mr. Thomson gave two examples of the youth takeover on university campuses. In one case a student of 20 is now officially in charge of the university. In another case the new 'head' is 23. Some of the staff have thrown in their lot with the cultural revolution; one or two have been co-opted on to the revolutionary committee. Others are being 'rectified' through corrective treatment.

'Seizing Power' is the term used by the cultural revolutionaries. It has been going on in municipalities, communes and provinces during 1967. It is a slow process of singling out the top party person in authority 'taking the capitalist road', whether he is the head of a school, dock, factory or anything else.

During his three-week visit Mr. Thomson spent eight days in Peking, four in Shanghai and three days each in Rsinan, Harbin and Hangchow. He travelled more than 2,500 miles inside China, but was not able to go to Canton, where he had lived, or to Wuhan, which was unsettled.

He stressed the friendliness he met everywhere. It was possible to engage in candid conversation 'on every conceivable topic', though he reported the Chinese to be hypersensitive on questions concerning Russia, the U.S., Hong Kong and the United Nations.

The Chinese are looking well beyond their own borders to the prospect of world revolution, he said. In spite of the fact that the cultural revolution was going on, he met people of at least 20 different nationalities in the various hotels in which he stayed.

Young people have dedicated themselves to 'Serving the people', putting wrongs right, and removing what remains of feudalism. At the same time civil liberty is at a premium, education in the strict sense has been suspended for a whole academic year and every religion driven underground.

EPS, Geneva.

Noted Roman Catholic Theologian Defends Luther's Doctrine

(Geneva)—'Luther, unlike others who had preceded him for 1,500 years includ-

ing St. Augustine, found direct access to St. Paul's doctrine of justification by faith and suddenly understood it again in its original meaning.'

This statement was made by Hans Kung, the Swiss Roman Catholic theologian, in a lecture at the university of Geneva, founded by John Calvin. The talk entitled 'Is Luther's doctrine of justification by faith a Catholic doctrine?' was in commemoration of the 450th anniversary of the Reformation.

Historically, however, it would be wrong to regard Luther's doctrine as entirely new, as Protestant theology tends to do, Kung contended. This doctrine was an integral part of the theological tradition that preceded it and cannot be understood without reference to the piety of the Middle Ages. Catholic theology today, therefore, can no longer condemn Luther's doctrine without condemning itself; in the same way protestant theology can no longer reject medieval theology without rejecting a large part of Luther's thinking.

The sole criterion by which the catholicity of Luther's doctrine of justification by faith can be judged is the original Christian message. The real question is: Did Luther base his doctrine on the New Testament? This he undoubtedly did, according to Kung. 'His point of departure was correct and so was his line of thought, despite its deficiencies and its bias.'

Admittedly, differences will always exist between Catholics and Protestants in interpreting the doctrine of justification, concluded the Swiss theologian. But can these justify church divisions?

EPS, GENEVA.

Inter-Church Aid Committee Acts on Nigeria, Mid-East, Vietnam

(Geneva)—The WCC's Divisional Committee on Inter-church Aid, Refugee, and World Service at its meeting here November 9-10 agreed to appeal, together with the special agency of the All Africa Conference of Churches (EPEAA), for \$250,000 for victims of the fighting in Nigeria, irrespective of religion, politics, or geography;

—authorized an immediate grant of \$30,000 towards the cost of medicines and medical equipment which the international Committee of the Red Cross airlifted to Biafra on November 11;

—instructed the division's acting director, Dr. Charles W. Arbuthnot, to

reactivate the WCC's \$2,000,000 appeal of last June for victims of the Arab-Israeli war; and

—agreed to distribute to all agencies interested in aiding North Vietnam a new 'shopping list' of medicines and medical equipment that can be bought in local currencies and shipped to Hanoi and reaffirmed its readiness to help homeless people throughout Vietnam.

The Committee emphasized that help must be available to all in need, whichever side of a boundary they might be on. It directed that everything possible should be done to help those cut off from the Nigerian Council of Churches.

The Committee also passed a special resolution to make plain once more that there is a continuing Christian Commitment to aid refugees on a global scale. The meeting was noteworthy because it was the first at which Roman Catholics were invited to participate.

—EPS, Geneva.

Young Australians to Build Home for Aborigines

(Sydney)—A project to assist in the assimilation of Aboriginal families and a summer vacation school will be conducted by 160 young churchmen in New South Wales in January. They will be participating in the ecumenical work camp programme of the N.S.W. Christian Youth Council.

About 60 of the work campers will build a home for an Aboriginal family in the township of Bega. Because there has been some resistance to such projects on the part of the white community, the young builders will also be interpreting to the community why the home is being located there instead of on an Aboriginal Reserve. Aboriginal youth are included in the camp team, and an attempt is being made to involve white townspeople in the project.

The new home, to be completed in three weeks, will be the sixth built by work campers in recent years.

The second project will involve campers as leaders of a three-week vacation centre for children, youth and adults at a new housing settlement at Warrangamba, on the outskirts of Sydney. The new suburb has few community facilities.

EPS, GENEVA.

New Strategy for Increasing Indian Food Production Proposed

(Bangalore) — 'Funds are presently available in much larger amount than formerly for financing good agricultural and food production projects in the voluntary sector', Dr. James J. Berna, development director of AFPRO, told the Southern Regional Conference here. He was addressing 210 delegates from Madras, Andhra, Mysore, Kerala and Goa engaged in food production, water

resources development and related agricultural projects.

(AFPRO is an ecumenical service agency co-ordinating food production projects in India.)

Dr. Berna said he used the word 'good' because sound, well-planned projects capable of meeting the standards of the larger donor agencies are not very easy to find. 'Some of these agencies are presently holding funds that we have been unable to absorb in India for lack of good project outlets', he explained.

Dr. Berna reported hope for genuine partnership between the voluntary groups at work in the field and the Government which must ultimately shoulder major responsibility for developing the country.

Proposing a new strategy, which he called the 'Selected Area Approach', he suggested the identification of certain promising areas of fairly large size. With the help of an AFPRO technical team, a plan for each area would be presented to interested donor agencies. An AFPRO staff person would work with the local task force and serve as a liaison between the area group and AFPRO. Dr. Berna asked the delegates to consider the feasibility of the plan in local areas.

A spirited debate developed on the relative merits of water divining and geo-physical surveys. One delegate suggested that AFPRO compile a table of success ratios of water diviners so that the most successful could be engaged when necessary. Others felt AFPRO should organise a team which would use geo-physical instruments for obtaining underground data.

Dr. Ralph Keithahn described how hundreds of unemployed people in his area at Batalagundu in Madras State are clearing waste lands, levelling and bunding the soil, and digging forty new wells. These landless agricultural labourers were bringing 500 acres of previously useless land under the plough.

He told of Franklin Zahn, an American engineer, who had experimented with a recommended brick-making machine. After sitting with the people of Kanavoi-patty, a village in Madras, and studying their mud-wall houses, he and they decided that the old method was better than the new for the conditions in which they lived.

Fr. Louis Madden of Bellary described the formation of village grain banks. Reversing the usual procedure whereby farmers sell their crops at the lowest prices at harvesting and buy back grain at the highest prices when food was short, they now stored their grain in airtight, vermin and thief-proof storage pits in their own villages, using it in the lean season and then repaying their drawings at the next harvest.

EPS, Geneva

Indian Churches to Increase Support for National Council

(Shillong, Assam)—Delegates to the Triennial Assembly of the National Christian Council of India agreed unanimously to the proposal that member churches and organisations should double their contribution to the Council. This reflects an attempt to make the NCC financially independent of help from outside India. In addition the delegates approved a proposal to erect a commercial building with the aid of gifts from abroad, which would provide two-thirds of the income needed to support the NCC secretariat, the remainder being covered by members' subscription.

EPS, Geneva.

Miscellaneous

The Japan Christian Council has voted to sponsor a Christian exhibition at the 1970 Osaka World Exposition taking as its theme 'Progress and Harmony for Mankind'. The Japan Catholic Church and the Evangelical Alliance will be invited to participate.

The Pope has accepted the resignation of Cardinal Paul Emile LeGéze, Archbishop of Montreal, who wishes to become a missionary working among lepers. The decision was taken last month when the Cardinal attended the Synod of Bishops in Rome.

Cardinal Leger is not new to missionary work having founded the Fukuoka Seminary in Japan in 1933. When rector of the Pontifical Canadian College in Rome he was active in collecting funds, food, clothing, and medicine for the Middle East. He was named Archbishop of Montreal in 1950.

EPS, Geneva.

Christians for the Future

The world-famous theologian and ecclesiastical statesman, Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, has chosen this title for four Lent talks. Dr. Visser 't Hooft, is, on any showing, a remarkable man. Though a pastor of the Netherlands Reformed Church, the whole of his ministry has been international in scope. His formidable intellect and forceful personality together with his capacity not merely to speak but to be at home in at least four languages, fitted him for his work as first Secretary of the World Committee of the Y.M.C.A. and later of the World Student Christian Federation. In 1938, ten years before its formal inception, he became Secretary-General of the World Council of Churches, a post which he held until the end of 1966 (and he still has an office in the World Council headquarters in Geneva). He has been called 'the architect of ecumenism' and few would dispute his right

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to the title, for his public and private influence in causing Christians to think in world terms has been incalculable.

In his Lent talks, Dr. Visser 't Hooft will consider, from his unique point of

vantage, some of the major questions facing men today and describe the qualities Christians will need if they are to speak usefully about them.

BBC World Service : Sundays March

3, 10, 17, 24, 2100-2115, Mondays March 4, 11, 18 and 25, 0315-0330 and 1315-1330 GMT.

B. B. C. WORLD SERVICE.

(continued from p. 14)

a constant revival and a growth of religious experience.

In his third address on 'The way of the New Creature', Rev. S. Clarke said that the changed way means the changed life. It means a progressive way and a hard way, a way of obedience and suffering. But it is a sustaining and rewarding way leading to eternal life.

The opening devotions on the second day were conducted by Rev. D. J. Elisha.

Following this the last address on 'The Fulness of the New Creature' was given. In the Gospels the Holy Spirit is a comforter and friend. Paul teaches that He is the Transformer of lives. When the apostles prayed in the upper room there was unity among them. Unity is necessary for the Holy Spirit to work. Through Him we are convicted of sin and enabled to witness for Christ.

After each address there were lively

discussions on thought-provoking questions. The retreat closed with a communion service conducted by Rev. S. Clarke and assisted by Rev. D. Pushparaj and Rev. B. Bhaskar. Everyone found these two days a great blessing. Our grateful thanks go to all those who helped to make it so.

MURIEL HANSON.

NOTICES

A CALL TO C.S.I. PRESBYTERS

Two clergymen of the Church of South India are needed to serve as missionaries in 'Dornakal Telugu Mission' field of the Indian Missionary Society. Those who take this as a divine call are requested to send their applications through their respective Bishops to reach the General Secretary before 30th March 1968.

E. P. GNANASIGAMONI,
General Secretary,
Indian Missionary Society,
Palayamkottai,
Tirunelveli-2.

NOTE

We record here, with gratitude, the very faithful and notable service done by the Rt. Rev. E. Priestley as Editor of this Magazine for several years. During most of the time he carried the burden of the *South India Churchman* along with his arduous responsibilities as a bishop. We wish him in retirement the joy, peace and continued usefulness that are the rewards of dedicated service.

WANTED

Applications from persons, lay or clergy, with adequate qualifications will be received through proper channels by Rev. J. A. J. Binks, Diocesan Office, Cathedral Post, Madras-6, up to 21-3-1968, for the post of Headmaster, Corley High School, Tambaram, Madras-59, from school year 1968-69. Attested copies of certificates and testimonials should accompany the application. Pay and D.A. will be fixed according to Government rules.

REGISTRATION OF NEWSPAPERS (CENTRAL)

(RULES 1956)

Statement about ownership and other Particulars about newspaper (SOUTH INDIA CHURCHMAN) to be published in the first issue of every year after the last day of February

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